

PROFESSOR: Dr. Erika Iyengar
E-mail: iyengar@muhlenberg.edu

Office: 320 NSB, 484-664-3731
Office Hours: Thursday 9:30-11:30 AM & by appointment

Class discussion meetings: officially scheduled for Tuesdays, 5 PM-6:50 PM in the Hoffman House; but often there are Center for Ethics events at other times and our discussions might shift to match those.

Class Policies and Syllabus

Course description:

This course is a requirement of the Dana Program and is designed for Dana students in their sophomore year. Connected to the Center for Ethics theme and events, it is designed to engage the intersection between academic work and active citizenship. Through attendance at Center lectures, assigned readings, and class discussions, we will explore some of the themes of this year's Center for Ethics series.

The goal of this course is to familiarize you with the skills, techniques, knowledge and frustrations of being an engaged citizen. Beyond the Center for Ethics talks, I will also assign a few readings for each of the talks. If you chose to go to that talk, then you should read the lectures before coming to our class discussion. If that is not one of the Center for Ethics talks you have elected to attend, you may read the papers but you are not required to do so. We will also have a few all-class discussions that have papers assigned that do not match up with a particular single Center for Ethics talk.

Fall 2018 **Center for Ethics** theme "The Ethics of the Anthropocene: Crisis Earth"

To see the options of the Center for Ethics talks and our subsequent class discussions, please visit this site and SIGN UP for the talks/classes you plan to attend:

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1vPKV4MzBBrsWGM2_GdsQfGpJOoEckFMQrRWKH5aKN8/edit?usp=sharing

****Please be aware that the Center for Ethics schedule occasionally changes on short notice. Watch for email and Canvas announcements.****

Required readings for each Center for Ethics event and our all-class discussions will be posted on Canvas and I will email out notifications as to when they are available. **I assume you will check your email at least once every 24 hour period. Stay informed.**

This course will have TWO required **ALL-CLASS** meetings: **Tuesday, Sept 4 and Tuesday, Nov 13**, both from 5:00 PM-6:50 PM in Hoffman House. Other than that, you are each **required** to sign up for and attend **at least FOUR** Center for Ethics events and the affiliated class meeting that is noted to be soon after that talk. You must go to the web page that is indicated above and **sign up** for your four intended talk-discussion pairs **by September 14**. If you have conflicts getting to four talks, you must open a discussion with Dr. Iyengar about this by September 14. If you plan to attend more than 4, please note under your name on the sign-up that you are a "maybe" for that one, even if you are sure you are going. You are required to attend a minimum of FOUR paired talks-discussions.

Special Note: Dr. Susan Shaw will give her public talk **on Tuesday, October 23 at 7:00 PM-8:30 PM**. We are lucky that our class has been allowed (along with my other students) to meet in a small group with her on Wednesday, Oct 24, from 5 PM to 6 PM. Dr. Shaw is the 2018 Woodrow Wilson visiting fellow, and it is quite an honor to have her meet with our class. Please make every effort to attend Dr. Shaw's talk, and the discussion the next day.

Course Unit Instruction. This is a 0.5 unit class, which is graded. This class is scheduled to meet at least six times for two-hour discussions and four times for 1.5 hours of professional (Center for Ethics) talks. Additional instructional activities include participation in Canvas discussion forums, meetings with the professor, and discretionary meetings with writing tutors and other students in the class. Together, these activities meet federal requirements for a course awarded 0.5 unit of credit.

Reading: All reading required for this course will be posted to Canvas. I will choose readings as we go, based on how our conversation develops. You will always receive reading assignments well in advance (generally I will announce in each meeting the readings for the subsequent meeting). I expect you to read carefully and to engage with the texts as you read them. Mark them up. Take notes. Pay attention to the authors' claims and to how they know what they know. Do you follow their argument? Do you believe their argument? Why or why not? Do you know other specific items that would help support or contradict the argument? You must bring the readings with you to class, so that we can discuss them together.

Canvas forums: In order to help you prepare for class, and to promote lively and productive discussion, you will post a comment or question about each day's readings (or one of the readings; you do not need to address them all each time—though you certainly must read them all) to a forum on our class Canvas site. Your comment or question may address any aspect of the readings, but should be thoughtful and designed to inspire discussion. Simple questions of fact and unanalyzed reactions (e.g. "I liked it.") will not fulfill this requirement. I encourage you to read your classmates' postings and to respond to others' questions and ideas. These postings are due by noon every Monday that class meets, if that is your chosen class meeting (or a dictated all-class meeting). Individual posts will not be graded, but I will assess your cumulative postings on the basis of their general thoughtfulness and substance.

Course goals.

1) Students will understand the interactions, complimentary approaches, and contradictory approaches that multiple disciplines have when examining the topic of human impacts on the environment.

2) Students will be able to interpret, review, analyze and apply data from oral arguments, observations, and tables and figures, to understand causes, establish relationships, and support logical interpretations of complex issues, especially dealing with human impacts on the environment.

3) Students can locate, read, and utilize both primary literature in their field and secondary literature in a variety of academic disciplines, to form written and oral arguments about human impacts on the environment and other topics of interest. Additionally, while engaged in these activities, students can assess whether claims by others are likely to accurately and sufficiently shed light on the questions of interest, or whether they are likely to be biased, misleading, or false in some other way.

4) Students will gain experience in engaging with oral and written scholarship and making connections between them

5) Students will be able to propose various ways that interested parties might become involved in actions that are related to human-mediated environmental alterations. Students can propose actions they could take to become players in the expanding dialog concerning human impacts on the

environment, whether those actions are direct, indirect, academic, non-governmental, or political. Students will be able to use their understanding of the complexity of unsolved issues to assist them to make social, political and ethical decisions.

Class Policies

Information. I use e-mail extensively for announcements. I may make announcements, including about deadlines and course readings, by email. It is your responsibility to check your email regularly, which means that **you should plan to check your email at least once every 24 hours, or every 48 hours on the weekends.** Not having checked your e-mail is no excuse for not knowing what is going on in class. I will use your **Muhlenberg e-mail** account to send you information, as Canvas is set up to bulk e-mail that way. I will NOT send e-mail to yahoo, hotmail, etc. accounts. If you prefer to use those accounts, contact the Information Technology department as to how to set up a mail forwarding system to transfer new e-mail from your Muhlenberg account to your pre-existing account. You should also be in the habit of regularly checking Canvas for course-related announcements, or have Canvas set up to email you when a new announcement is posted.

You may also use email to reach me. When you send email to me, include your full name at the end of the email (sign your emails!) and an indication of your subject in the message subject line. I will endeavor to answer emails about course matters—if sent with a proper subject line and signed with your name—within 24 hours (48 hours on weekends). **NOTE:** while I check Canvas for emails, my Canvas does not automatically send emails to me. Therefore, **if you need to get ahold of me in less than 24 hours, directly email me, don't just use the Canvas function!**

Attendance. Attendance is required and is essential for success in this class. I expect you to attend every lecture and laboratory. I cannot imagine that you will find it possible to master the material without engaged class attendance, both at the Center for Ethics talks and in our class discussions. You are to sign up for at least four pairs of Center for Ethics talks/our class discussions. If you miss either part (or both parts) of any of your elected paired classes, it is unlikely that you will be allowed to make up that missed portion of the class, even if the miss was for a valid reason. **Contact me as far ahead of time as possible for any potential conflicts for lecture/class attendance that might arise.** Although I am here to help, you are adults and will be treated as such — with your freedom comes responsibility, and ultimately you must be responsible for your own education. Please take an active role during discussions, lectures and readings, and ask questions and put your brain in gear to see connections and conflicts **across different presentations**. Active participation in class discussions makes the class more interesting for everyone, makes it easier for you to stay awake, and makes it easier for you to learn. So engage!

Academic dishonesty. Please familiarize yourself with the College's Academic Integrity Code. I have zero tolerance for academic dishonesty, including plagiarism, looking at a classmate's exam, use of cheat sheets, use of unauthorized technology, etc. Instances of dishonesty with later honesty about the offense may be punished by a zero on the assignment and a letter in your personnel file (first offense) and a VF in the class (second offense). In instances of plagiarism/cheating, all parties involved will receive the same penalty. Do not share your work to help a friend if you are not prepared to take the penalty should that "friend" borrow your work. If you have questions, please ask me. Please do not let yourself be tempted; avoid potential situations that may lead to academic dishonesty. If an issue arises where you need extra help, talk to me well ahead of time (a week before the due date) so we can discuss options. That is much better than cheating.

Please note, that, although you might also be required to attend Center for Ethics talks for other classes, it is assumed and required that anything you turn in for this class has NOT been turned in for any other class. If this sort of situation arises for you (you are going to a certain

talk for both this class and another), please approach me about this issue ahead of the lecture, so we may discuss how to proceed. Also note that, while I expect you to sign an AIC at the top right of the front page of your hard-copy assignments, since you cannot do that on-line, I assume that any assignment you have turned in, either with your name on the top or with an electronic signature/computer indicated authorship, is your work and you have stated implicitly that you have adhered to the Academic Integrity Code. So, a violation of the AIC by any work that has your identification information on it is a violation of the AIC, regardless of whether you explicitly placed a signed AIC on the page.

Grading. ** Please note: I reserve the right to make changes in the course schedule and grading scheme at any time. Note: There are no opportunities for individual extra-credit. Please don't ask.

Grades are based on the percentage of total points earned as indicated in the table below:

Grade	Description	Percentage Basis
A+	Outstanding	Rarely given to the highest in class, must be >98% for consideration
A	Excellent	93-97.99%
A-	Excellent	90-92.99%
B+	Very Good	87-89.99%
B	Good	83-86.99%
B-	Good	80-82.99%
C+	Satisfactory	77-79.99%
C	Satisfactory	73-76.99%
C-	Marginally Satisfactory	70-72.99%
D	Marginal	60-69.99%
F	Failing	<60%

Your grade in this course will be determined by a weighted average of your grades on the papers and your participation in class discussion. Grades will be calculated according to the following system:

- Showing up (to classes and to CforE events as required): 10%
- Active and thoughtful participation when you are present: 20%
- Canvas forums: 20%
- First (short) paper: 20%
- Final paper 30%

This course will have TWO required **ALL-CLASS** meetings: **Tuesday, Sept 4 and Tuesday, Nov 13**, both from 5:00 PM-6:50 PM in Hoffman House.

***** Mid-semester paper due by NOON, Friday, 5 October***** (before fall break)**

****Final papers due in NSB 320 by NOON on Friday, November 30****

Graded work will be returned to you in class or at a designated pick-up time. You are responsible for keeping copies of all graded work until semester grades have been posted.

Please come to office hours (or make an appointment) if you have a question or concern about a grade in this course. I will not discuss grades over email or by telephone. I am happy to answer questions about course material over email.

Participation. Students are expected to actively participate in class discussions and in on-line discussions. Verbal communication is as important as written communication (on exams, in papers). If you are very shy about speaking in front of others, this is a skill you will need to work on, same as working on writing or studying skills. Brilliant ideas, if not shared, are worthless—and may not be as brilliant as they would have been had others managed to fine-tune them in collaboration with the inventor. Merely showing up to class is a given, and will warrant a 1 out of 5 points for that day's participation grade. Merely agreeing or reiterating statements made by others is also not considered active participation. On the other hand, perpetually chatting but contributing nothing meaningful/substantial to the discussion at hand will also not contribute positively to your class participation grade. Effective class participants engage with the material at hand, providing insightful points based on supporting factual information. Effective participants also listen and respond in courteous but heartfelt and cerebrally-engaged ways to the opinions voiced by the other members of the class. Come to class prepared to engage with the material and each other, add your thoughts, and do not be afraid to argue with others! Come to lab prepared for the weather with a cheery disposition, aware of what is going to happen in lab that day, and an eagerness to work with others to accomplish the stated goals for the lab. Positive attitudes spread like wildfire!

Classroom etiquette: The classroom is a formal public space, and I expect you to act with respect and professionalism towards me, your classmates, and our collaborative learning endeavor. Arrive on time, and stay until class is dismissed. If you know that you must leave early, sit near the door and exit with a minimum of noise. Turn off all cell phones and anything else that might beep, ring, vibrate, or otherwise make noise during class. When someone makes a comment with which you disagree, you **SHOULD** contradict them, but you should do it in a polite and respectful manner. Not all of us agree. That should not shut down dialogue, that should encourage dialogue, so that we all learn from each others' views and insights.

Exams. There are no exams, including no final examination, in this class.

Late assignments. Papers due on a day that class meets are due at the beginning of class on the designated date. Papers due on a day when class does not meet must be turned in to me in my office, under my office door, or in my department mailbox by the designated time. All papers must be submitted in hard copy. In fairness to all who complete their work on time, late assignments will be **penalized** by automatically being marked down one step per 24-hours late (e.g., B changes to a B-, etc.), starting 30 minutes after the time it is due (see directly above). Computer or printer problems are never an acceptable excuse for late work. Plan ahead.

Computers ALL written exercises (except for assignments specifically intended to be completed in-class) for this class are to be typewritten using black ink. Before turning in any assignment, make sure that all pages are numbered, present, and have your name at the top. Papers longer than one page **MUST** be **stapled** (or you will lose points), the font must be at least **12-point**, spacing must be at least **1.5 lines**, and the writing must be **clear** (no anemic or smudging printer ribbons). Be sure to keep a hard copy (Xerox or second printing) of anything you turn in. If an assignment mysteriously disappears and you claim you turned it in, I will expect that you will be able to produce another copy within 20 minutes for a conversation about the missing work to continue.

It is widely understood on campus that computers and printers are malevolent and unpredictable and the proper functioning of a printer is inversely related to the level of panic in the user at the time the final print command is received. It is virtually guaranteed that the printer will be down the night before any major assignment or paper is due. The malfunctioning of any printer or computer or disk failure is not an acceptable reason for failure to submit a hard copy (disks not

acceptable) of your paper on time. Frequent back-up of files is a corollary of responsible computer use. Back-up your data frequently, and keep a separate copy on a different disk, in a safe place. Helpful hint: when saving work, **save under different file names**. Then, if a file becomes corrupted, you have an earlier incarnation, not nothing.

Help. Please don't hesitate to ask questions or come to me for help. If you are having difficulty understanding the material please come to me **early**. There is not much I can do for you after exams are taken, and there are no opportunities for extra credit. Since you are not competing for a limited number of As, working together in study groups is highly recommended. However, be sure that work handed in is your own and not a study partner's.

I encourage students with documented disabilities or special needs who require accommodations for this course to contact Academic Support Services, the Counseling Center, or Student Health Services early in the semester and then contact me. Students with disabilities requesting classroom or course accommodations must complete a multi-faceted application/approval process through the Office of Disability Services prior to the development and implementation of an Accommodation Plan. Each Accommodation Plan is individually and collaboratively developed with the Directors or staff of the following Departments, as appropriate: Academic Resource Center, Office of Counseling Services, Student Health Services, and the Office of Disability Services. If you have not already done so, please contact the appropriate Department to have a dialogue regarding your academic needs and the recommended accommodations, auxiliary aides, and services and then contact me. Please do this as soon as possible so that we may have a dialogue as to your needs and the recommended accommodations. It is the policy and practice of Muhlenberg College to make reasonable accommodations for students with properly documented disabilities. **You must allow me one-week notice before the accommodation is needed.** Otherwise, it is not guaranteed that the accommodation can be arranged in a timely basis. Individual contact regarding extra help or learning disabilities will be handled with complete confidentiality following guidelines set by the college.

The Writing Center: I encourage you to use the Writing Center located in Trexler Library. The Center provides peer support for your academic work, and takes drop-ins at any point in the semester. The Writing Center is not only for students who are struggling; anyone may benefit from a visit there. Of course, you are also always welcome to come to office hours (or make an appointment) to discuss directly with me any concerns you may have about your work, or simply any questions you may have about course content, assignments, or the themes of the course generally.

Personal Requirements: Be polite to me and your classmates. Here are some guidelines to facilitate this:

- Come to class prepared and **on time**, having done the reading and thought about it. Eat, drink, and visit the bathroom before class so that there is no need to leave the room during class for any reason. Wandering students, whether wandering around the classroom or in and out of the classroom, are distracting to everyone and will not be tolerated.
- No talking to others during class. If you have a question, ask me. If you want to chat, leave class. Whispering and talking other than class participation will not be tolerated.
- Before class, turn OFF all pagers and cell phones. **If your cell phone rings** during class you will **owe me** a three-page (graded) paper on a topic and due date of my choice. Do not use your cell phone in class, even if it is just to text. If you need your cell phone to tell the time, buy a watch. Cell phones should not be obvious during class. They are distracting to you and those around you. **No texting in class is allowed.**

- **Use of computers in the classroom:** I do not recommend computers in the classroom, as they are too distracting for many people and likely slow you down in terms of note-taking and creative thinking. If you choose to use a computer in class, the only program that should be open on it is a document-formation program (such as Word) so you can type notes. If you have a legitimate reason for having another program open, discuss this with me before class. In other words, no games, no email, and no surfing the web.
- In class, limit food and beverages to those that can be consumed quietly.
- You are allowed to tape record class discussions, and if you feel you are a slow note-taker or prone to miss things, I encourage you to do so.
- **Points will be deducted** from your work if these requirements are not met: **STAPLE** all papers that are handed in, with your name and a page number on every page. Papers should be space and a half or double-spaced, with one inch margins all around. All submitted work should be type-written using black ink if not an in-class assignment, in pen (blue or black) if it is an in-class assignment. All work must be legible--if I cannot read it, it is incorrect. I won't try to guess.
- I assume that for any work you turn in with your name on it, you have pledged to adhere to the **Academic Integrity Code** whether or not you remember to note and sign the AIC on the front page of the assignment.
- **I do NOT ACCEPT any e-mailed assignments** (unless I specifically say: e-mail me this assignment). This means that all papers, worksheets, etc. need to be turned in by the due deadline in hard copy to not count as late. Note that late assignments receive a penalty (see grading section above).
- Ask questions, challenge, and engage your classmates, your professor and yourself!

Get to know me and let me get to know you. We all came to Muhlenberg to interact—so let's do it! I encourage groups of students to invite me for coffee or lunch. Also, invite me to your activities and events. . . I will certainly make an effort to attend. Engaged citizenry is a wide-ranging subject that affects each of our lives daily.

GET INTERESTED and, in doing so, BE more interesting!

Most importantly, I hope you enjoy this class and gain many skills and confidence in discussing complicated concepts!

